

THE QUIVER

Saturday, February 3, 1872.



"I shall leave you to one who will love you"—p. 277.

HIS BY RIGHT.

BY ALTON CLYDE, AUTHOR OF "UNDER FOOT," "JOHN HESKETH'S CHARGE," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER LII.—ACCEPTED.

THE frequent visits of the Honourable Augustus Appleby to Chadburn Court, and his pointed attentions to Lucy, all faithfully reported to Frank Ainsworth by letters from his sister Charlotte, gave that young officer serious uneasiness, for his jealous fancy was ingenious in self-torture, and ready to magnify every trifle in favour of his rival. It was no secret to him that Augustus Appleby meant

matrimony, also that his suit for Lucy would be encouraged by the powerful support of Lady Chadburn and her son Cyril, and his only hope lay in the young lady herself and her father. But even with regard to Lucy, there were times when he fancied that she treated him rather coolly, and he had noticed that it was when Mr. Appleby was present. At such times he would murmur to himself, "It's no use being downhearted, girls are so contrary, and never know their own minds; I must do my best to keep that fellow at arm's length, and the only way to do it, is to bring Charlotte with me and get her alongside of him, for she's the only one who manages to keep him at anything like a respectable distance when Lucy and I are together, at other times he hovers round us as if determined to give me no chance in the fight."

After the discovery that his sister Charlotte was such a useful ally, he rarely visited Chadburn Court without taking her with him, in case his honourable rival should be there.

Frank Ainsworth loved Lucy Chadburn; their chance encounter among the Swiss mountains had hastened the self-revelation; from that day he had known that his life's happiness depended upon the winning for himself the love of the fair dove-eyed girl, whom his heart had enshrined from the days when he first made her acquaintance as his sister's playmate—a blue-eyed, fairy-looking sprite, in short white frock and sash. That was the picture which his memory had retained of her, and almost unconsciously letting her get dear and dearer, yielding without resistance to the passion that enthralled him, and riveting his chains in such a manner that he did not realise he was bound until he became conscious that it was too late to struggle for freedom.

The result of his sister Charlotte's letters had been to make him restless and miserable, and had the effect of making him hurry home whenever it was possible to obtain leave of absence. Sixteen months ago, when he and Lucy stood together in the garden at East End Farm, an avowal had been trembling on his lips, but he had checked it, with the feeling that it was not the time for him to speak about himself when she was grieving about her brother, who, there was too much reason to fear, had shared the fate of the rest of the passengers by the ill-fated ship *Mermaid*. But the time for which he waited came at last. During one of his hurried visits home he saw Lucy and the Hon. Augustus walking together in Chadburn Park, and the honourable gentleman did not, as was his usual custom, give way to Frank Ainsworth, but persistently kept his place by the lady's side, an act which so exasperated and at the same time frightened the young lieutenant, that he seized the first opportunity which presented itself to whisper his secret. In return, pretty Lucy betrayed a kittenish propensity to tease, torturing him with all manner of coy

feminine evasions, and kept him on the rack of uncertainty as to her real feelings towards himself and the Honourable Mr. Appleby, to whom she meted a fair amount of friendly courtesy—more than was required, Frank thought, but he did not attempt to deprive the Honourable Augustus of any attractions, either personal or mental. The young officer was too proud and sensitive to seek to advance his own cause by disparaging his rival.

So Lucy had gone on coquetting with Frank until they had been on the verge of parting, with the question undecided between them. It was not until the lieutenant, stung almost to desperation by what he interpreted as signs of Lucy's indifference, began to despair, and in his excitement talked somewhat wildly at resigning the service, giving up his inheritance and place in the family to his brother Tom, then going abroad like Harold—to exile, and it might be death. This threat and the mention of Harold conquered Lucy at once, and deprived her of all power to tantalise. As Frank expressed it, she lowered her flag and surrendered, giving him a blushing permission to "ask papa."

Satisfied that his own parents fully approved of his choice, Frank lost no time in seeking to secure his position by applying to Lucy's father, by whom his proposal was very graciously received.

"All right, my boy," said Sir Richard, heartily; "if my little girl thinks she can like you well enough, I will give her to you with my blessing, for I think you will make her a good husband, Frank."

That made Lucy's second offer of marriage that day, for though Frank did not know it, the Honourable Augustus Appleby had proposed just before his arrival, and had been refused by the young lady, greatly to the chagrin of her brother Cyril.

Lady Chadburn was also strong in her expressions of disapprobation, when she learnt Frank's errand to Chadburn Court, and her husband informed her what answer Lucy had given.

"What! am I to understand that you are willing to receive an Ainsworth for your son-in-law, and that Lucy encourages him?"

As Lady Chadburn put these queries she dropped the piece of cambric she had been hemming. Sir Richard gallantly picked it up, saying, composedly, "Why not, my dear? I don't know anything that either you or I could find against Frank Ainsworth."

"Perhaps not, Richard, but that does not make him a suitable match for Lucy. I had hoped to see her very differently settled."

"Very differently settled, my dear! why you surprise me. I don't believe you could find her a better husband if you were to hunt up all the young men in the country. He comes from a good old stock, a family that always held up their heads as honourable men, and he will have a pretty fair rent-roll; is good looking and has plenty of sense: what can any girl want more?"

Before Lady Chadburn could answer this question, while the cloud of displeasure was still shadowing her face, the door opened and Cyril came in. One glance at his mother's face sufficed to tell him that he was interrupting a not very agreeable tête-à-tête. He was not left in doubt as to what had disturbed the maternal mind, for Lady Chadburn at once drew him into the conversation by a direct appeal so abrupt that it might have disconcerted any one but Cyril, her voice, too, sounded hard and strange. The subject of her daughter's matrimonial settlement was one on which the ambitious mother felt strongly. Failing a higher title, she had hoped to see Lucy married to Augustus Appleby, and a viscountess in prospect.

"Cyril, will you be surprised to hear that Lieut. Ainsworth has made a proposal to your father for Lucy's hand?"

"No, mother, I have expected it for some time."

"And that it is likely to end in their marriage, your father having given his consent?"

"I am sorry to hear it."

Here Sir Richard struck in. "Sorry to hear it! and pray why are you sorry, sir?"

"For my sister's sake."

"Indeed, and why for her sake?" queried the baronet, testily. "Have you anything against Frank Ainsworth?"

Cyril answered evasively, but with his usual wily policy, "This is a matter in which I should not allow my own opinions to weigh anything; I regret making the remark."

"That will not satisfy me, sir, I must have an explanation," and the baronet rose from his seat. "You tell me you are sorry that I have accepted Frank Ainsworth for your sister's husband; I must know why."

"I believe she could do much better, and that her happiness would be in much surer hands, if she had made a different choice."

Cyril spoke in a quiet, conciliating tone, and his father looked uneasily at him, as if he thought he was still evading the question. He repeated his query: "Have you anything to say against Frank Ainsworth, Cyril?"

"Personally, I know nothing against him, father; but I am sure Lucy could do better."

On receiving that answer, the baronet resumed his seat, saying in a slightly sarcastic tone, "That settles the question relating to Frank Ainsworth; now about your sister doing better. Are you alluding to your friend, the Honourable Mr. Appleby?"

"Yes, father, I am" (Cyril spoke mildly); "and he would do his best to deserve the honour, which I know he covets, and I also know that he is going to make Lucy an offer of marriage to-day or to-morrow."

"I believe it is to take place to-day, Cyril," Sir Richard remarked quietly. "Mr. Appleby called on

me this morning, and I told him, as I told Frank Ainsworth, that it all rests with Miss Lucy; as she makes her choice, so it shall be—but she must not be interfered with. I have nothing to say against Augustus Appleby, but for myself I prefer Frank; but as I have said, she must decide for herself."

So it was settled, both Cyril and his mother knew from the baronet's decided tones, that he would not have his daughter biassed in her choice.

CHAPTER LIII.

A NEW PLOT.

RESOLUTE of purpose, as he was relentless and unyielding of will, Cyril Chadburn determined to leave nothing untried to conquer the prejudices of Lewis Darley, and it was possible to correct the unfavourable impression which he felt sure he was cherishing against him. With this end in view, he determined to make another effort to conciliate the old man, and if possible, prevail upon him to come to terms with respect to the old castle of Chadburn, and the lands surrounding it; even offering in exchange a recent purchase of his own, a desirable tract of building land in the suburbs of Chesterdale. In the event of the exchange being accepted, the pecuniary advantage would unquestionably rest on the side of Lewis Darley, for the land offered by Cyril, though much smaller than that surrounding the castle, was undeniably of greater value, and a decided bargain.

It was about a week after his interview with Bessie that he wrote to Lewis Darley, offering to make the exchange. Two days passed without bringing an answer to his letter, but Cyril was patient, anguring good from the delay. If the old man had answered at once, it might have been a point-blank denial, such as he had received on other occasions, but now the old man was evidently taking time to consider.

The morning of the third day brought the letter so eagerly watched for. It was handed to him by Sir Richard, who usually distributed the contents of the letter-bag. Something in the appearance of the letter attracted the attention of the baronet, who glanced with some curiosity at the handwriting, but it was quickly dismissed from his thoughts, and he was soon busy with the contents of his own letters.

It would have been difficult to guess from Cyril's outward calmness how much he was excited by the sight of Lewis Darley's letter; except for a slight quivering of his long white fingers as he opened the envelope, he gave no external sign of the severity of the strain he was putting upon himself. Lucy saw his start of surprise as he commenced reading the letter. She was seated opposite him, coquetting with her cup of chocolate, for which she did not seem to have much appetite. She had just succeeded in mastering the contents of a double-crossed letter from a lady friend, which might certainly have been regarded as an epistolary curiosity. At first she

wondered if Cyril's correspondent was her rejected suitor, Augustus Appleby, but quickly decided that it was not. She saw his face change as he went on reading. At first a wrinkled perplexed brow, then a quick flash of intelligence and a look of irrepressible eagerness, as if the letter contained news that pleased him. It was a play of expression new to Cyril's smooth face, but Lucy was not sufficiently learned in physiognomy to be able to translate it. She remarked that there was unusual elation in her brother's manner, as he carefully folded his letter, then emptied his cup and pushed it forward to be refilled, saying cheerfully to his father, "Have you any commissions in Workenbury? I am going to ride over to-day, and shall be glad to execute them. If you have any message for the doctor, I can deliver it, as I shall call there; I have been suffering from a severe pain in my left side, and must have it attended to, either by Dr. Ward or his assistant. By-the-bye, I believe they say Mr. Darley is clever?"

"Clever!" repeated Sir Richard, emphatically, "there is not the least doubt of it; I know that if Dr. Ward was not to be got at, I should have no fear of putting myself in the hands of young Darley, which you must admit would be a good proof of confidence on my part."

Cyril laughed, discussing his breakfast with apparently keen relish. Lucy watched him with mingled curiosity and interest. She could not help wondering if the letter he had received and just read was to be considered accountable for his altered manner; also, if it had anything to do with his visit to Workenbury. It had, but in what way she would have been puzzled to discover. Even if she could have looked over his shoulder and read it for herself, she would have been more mystified than ever, for she would not have understood the letter, which began, "My dear Gerald." It was from Lewis Darley to his nephew, written after his visit to Workenbury, containing what he had intended to make the subject of a personal interview.

The letter gave a clear exposition of the writer's hopes and wishes concerning a marriage between his nephew and Bessie Grant, to which was added a careful transcript of the conditions of his somewhat eccentric will, and the terms under which each would inherit their share of his wealth. It concluded with a few pathetic words of appeal, that showed the tender place in the old man's heart, and came out strongly in contrast with the hard business tones of the rest.

Cyril Chadburn was not slow to comprehend what accident had placed in his hands a letter intended for another.

Lewis Darley had evidently been writing to Cyril Chadburn and his nephew at the same time, and had inadvertently placed the letters in the wrong envelopes—a mistake of which Cyril would have no scruple in availing himself. He was exulting in his

newly-acquired knowledge, which he already saw could, with a little scheming, be made to serve his own interests. He saw that if he could manage to separate Gerald and Bessie, his success was almost certain, for he knew of no other obstacle between him and the miser's immense wealth. Lewis Darley had omitted to put the new clause into the letter.

"To think of his will being tied up like that, the sly old fox; but he has outwitted himself. I must manage by some means to get this Gerald Darley to refuse to marry Bessie Grant, then my course is clear, and if perseverance succeeds, the prize shall be mine, and the old man's will, so cunningly devised to bring those two together, be one of the means of keeping them apart. So much for Lewis Darley's will."

Cyril Chadburn said this to himself, as he made preparations for his visit to Workenbury, where he had resolved to go for the purpose of seeing Gerald Darley.

"We must be friends, intimate friends, then I can put my plan into execution."

Would he succeed in his evil mission?

CHAPTER LIV.

WHAT PHOEBE FOUND.

It was yet early morning. In some of the principal thoroughfares drowsy shopmen were beginning to take down shutters, but most of the streets presented a dull uniformity of closed windows and drawn blinds. The city had not yet roused to the life of the busy working day; but early as it was, Bessie Grant was out and at work upon her flower-beds, as she had been from an untimely hour that morning, not much to the satisfaction of Phoebe, who had no passion for early rising; and, to use her own phraseology, "often wondered what could possess Miss Bessie to be out walking, or working at her flower-beds, at a time when she ought to be sound asleep and dreaming in her bed."

Bessie's appearance that morning would seem to justify the often-repeated remonstrance of Phoebe, "that she was sure her young mistress was wearing herself out by her fancy for early rising; they wouldn't catch her getting up with the sparrows."

The young lady was looking unusually pale; but mental anxiety was more concerned in it than physical weariness, though her protracted morning exercise might have helped to give her a drooping, languid air. She had taken off her garden-hat and laid it on the ground beside her, as if glad to be relieved from its weight, and to feel the fresh kiss of the breeze upon her forehead.

The truth was that she was troubled about the old man; he had had another fainting-fit, which had visibly told upon him. It was while he lay struggling with the weakness that followed the attack that poor Bessie, for the first time, had to face the terrible probability of his death; but the thought brought

such heart-ache that she pushed it from her, unable to dwell upon the desolate picture of herself treading her lonely path of life, bereft of the love which had always been its support and shield.

It was touching to see how the old man cared for her through all, considering her in the most minute trifles—so mindful of her feelings, and anxious to spare her pain. It was for her sake that he fought so resolutely against the sickness that was slowly but surely overpowering him—fought to keep moving on in the old groove, and make no sign. "When the summer comes I may get stronger, Philis, and I will not have my darling frightened."

Such was his answer to Philis, when the old house-keeper begged of him not to remain so much alone in the study, for he knew well that Bessie would at once take alarm if he made any change in the daily routine of his life. When the second fit had seized him, and it was no longer possible to keep the secret from her, he did his best to soften it, keeping back as much as was possible; but Bessie's fears had been roused.

"You are keeping the truth from me, uncle. You said Philis had exaggerated when she told me of your first attack, now I know she was right."

It was then that he had taken her hands in his, and drawn her to him, saying, brokenly, "My darling, I am sorry I cannot keep it any longer from you, but perhaps it is better that you should know, for it must come, Bessie, and the shock would be all the worse if it found you unprepared." Bessie's eyes filled with tears, and the old man turned away his head as he continued, "I am wearing out fast, darling, but I hope to stay until I have found my treasure a better shelter than I can give—"

Bessie clung to him, crying passionately, "Oh, uncle! take me with you."

"I wish I could, darling; but you have your work yet to do—mine is nearly finished."

"Don't talk so, uncle, I cannot bear the thought of being left behind to live my life alone, with no one to need me or my love."

In reply, the old man had fondly stroked the brown head that nestled to him, murmuring, "You are mistaken, child, there are those who will need you even more than I do, and will love and tend you better than I ever did; that comforts me."

"Don't—oh, uncle! don't, you will break my heart."

"And you mine, Bessie, if you cry like that. Come, don't fret, darling, I may be spared to you for a long time; and when I am gone I shall leave you to one who will love you."

But Bessie refused to accept the consolation thus offered. "I don't want to be left to any one. Oh, uncle, I cannot bear to hear you talk in that strain, it breaks my heart. I want to be left in no other hands than yours, they are the truest, kindest, for they never gave me a harsh or angry touch in my

whole life—never, never! hands that are always doing kind acts for me."

"Nay, Bessie, you forget the old miserly recluse, who is known as a soured misanthrope; you know I am forbidding and hard."

"Never to me, uncle—never anything to me but the best and tenderest friend."

So she had spoken, with quietly-dropping tears.

The old man said nothing, but, with her hands still in his, waited until the wave of sorrow had spent itself; then he said, "How long is it before your twenty-first birthday, Bessie?"

"About nine months, uncle."

"Nine months." The old man repeated it in a half-musing tone that said, plainly as if it had been put into words, "Shall I last that long?" As the thought shaped itself in his mind, his head drooped until his white hair mingled with hers, and he murmured, "Pray Heaven I may! But there is no time to lose, if I am to realise the dearest wish of my heart, and see her married to Gerald before I die. My darling, I am almost afraid of trusting you with him."

The last words being unconsciously spoken aloud, Bessie raised her head, and asked anxiously, "Afraid of trusting me with whom, uncle?"

But he did not answer her question—only stroked the glossy head with a tender, caressing touch, then kissed her, and murmured to himself, "Ayrton is safe; that's something to be thankful for."

It was the remembrance of this interview with the old man that was troubling Bessie on the morning that she worked so early among her flowers. She had just finished, and had drawn off her gloves, sighing as she glanced wistfully towards the window of the old man's chamber. His illness seemed to have taken some of the youthful spring out of her life. She was thinking sadly of their interview of the preceding day, recalling certain words which he had dropped concerning her future settlement. She was trying to puzzle out their meaning, when she was startled to see Phoebe rushing towards her from the house, holding something between her forefinger and thumb, her face a perfect study in its odd mixture of expressions.

Bessie was taken by surprise, and showed it in her manner, as she asked almost breathlessly, "Phoebe, Phoebe! is anything the matter with your master?"

"Nothing, Miss Bessie, that I know of."

"Then why do you rush out in that wild manner, and frighten me?"

"I just come to show you what I have found in Mr. Gerald's room. I think it belongs to him, and he must have left it the last time he was here."

As Phoebe spoke, she held up for the inspection of her young mistress a bookmark, evidently intended for a pocket Bible. It exhibited a pretty and appropriate design, elegantly worked out in beads and glistening silken threads.

Phoebe added, as she placed it in Bessie's hand, "Some young lady must have made it for him, miss."

She was right; some one had made it for Gerald.

Bessie's quick eyes detected his initials worked into the centre of a flower, and under it, in the same tiny letters, she made out the words, "From Sylvia."

(To be continued.)

LOVE'S YEAR.

WHEN the elm was a mist of green—
Oh, hope and love will bud in Spring!—
First I trembled to hear her laughs
Gay through the greening woodlands ring.

When the elm with June was dark—
Ah! how dear is the Summer shade!—
Flushed with hope I rode by her side,
Or whispered her on through fern and glade.

Ah! when Autumn yellowed the elm—
A ban upon its withering gold!—
Chilled her smiles and her tones to me,
Then for his wealth her life she sold.

Winter, sigh through the leafless elm!
Bare, all bare, let it shiver and moan!
Winter's her heart with loveless pride;
Mine is Winter and grief alone!

W. C. BENNETT.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF REPENTANCE.

BY THE REV. ROBERT MAGUIRE, M.A., VICAR OF CLERKENWELL.

"Return, and welcome: if thou wilt, thou shalt;
Although thou canst not of thyself, yet I
That call can make thee able. Let the fault
Be mine, if, when thou wilt return, I let thee lie."

AFTER sin committed, there must be either condemnation or repentance. Let us hope it will ever be the latter of these. I desire in this paper to illustrate what Repentance is; and we can be at no loss for a practical "illustration" of this, inasmuch as we have recorded in the Holy Scriptures so many edifying examples of repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. One of the most instructive of these is the narrative of that woman in the Gospel who bathed the Saviour's feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head (Luke vii. 37, &c.). This narrative contains within it all that repentance is, all that it attempts, all that it effects—namely, the true sense of sin; the true expression of sorrow for sin; and, in the comment of Christ, the true motive of repentance. If, then, I were asked to say what these things are *like*, I would answer, The penitent soul must be "like" that woman in the Pharisee's house.

This narrative is in itself a great picture of this great truth. That is to say: (1) The woman was a sinner; she knew this, and felt it. There can be no repentance without knowledge of sin. Conviction leads to compunction, and compunction to repentance. (2) This woman came to Jesus, the Saviour of sinners. When she knew where to find him, she came and sought him. (3) She brought her offering—an offering of a sweet savour, like Mary of Bethany—the alabaster box of ointment.

(4) She brought a better offering still; her heart gave a nobler offering than her hand—she washed the Saviour's feet *with her tears*. (5) The root of all this was that which is the only true motive of repentance—"she loved much." Ah, these tears of repentance! they are more costly than the most precious spikenard. The ointment could be bought for a price, but *tears*—never. It was this very circumstance that protected this woman from the hard criticism that assailed that other woman in the Gospel (Mark xiv. 5), that the offering "might have been sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor." No such criticism assails this woman's act, for tears can neither be bought nor sold; they come from the well-spring of the *heart*—that fountain which only true repentance and firm faith can open. Hence repentance has been somewhere said to be "the tear dropped from the eye of faith."

In the tears of true repentance is exhibited the strongest power of faith. They are fruits borne from the bitter root of sin—of sin felt and realised, and constitute one of the most acceptable of the sacrifices we can offer unto God. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit" (Ps. li. 17). "Every night wash I my bed, and water my couch with my tears" (Ps. vi. 6). "Oh, that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears" (Jer. ix. 1). Peter had no sooner denied his Master than, under the sorrowstricken glance of his Lord, he was moved to repentance, and "went out and wept bitterly" (Luke xxii. 62). Hence St. Jerome esteems tears of true penitence as more mighty than the power of prayer—"Prayer appeases God, but a tear *compels* him; prayer moves him, but a

tear *constrains* him." Hence, also, those very significant words of Quarles :—

"Earth is an island ported round with fears;
Thy way to heav'n is through the sea of tears;
It is a stormy passage, where is found
The wreck of many a ship, but no man drowned."

Yes, in the depths of that sea of sorrow many a crazy craft goes down; many goods and chattels go by the board; many treasures of the heart, many fondled idols of the soul—but the crew is saved; life, human life, is preserved. It is as in St. Paul's memorable shipwreck—"There shall be no loss of any man's life, but of the ship;" and it is well when craft and cargo are thus dispensed with, because the life, the dear life, is regarded as indispensable.

"Repentance" means a change or turning of the mind. "Conversion" indicates the practical result, when we *are* turned. First of all is the thought, or desire, or intention; and then the act which gives effect to that intention or desire. Whoso hath strayed out of the way must return by the way he came. The prodigal had arrived at the stage of repentance when "he came to himself," and reasoned with himself, and turned the eye of his mind and remembrance back to his father's house; and then he said, "I will arise and go to my father," and in carrying this into effect, was his conversion. So, also, oftentimes, as in the case of the prodigal, repentance is preceded by humiliation. "Sorrow is sin's echo." Alas! too terribly responsive an echo! And the more broken the rocks, and the more extended their range, the more distinct and oft-repeated are the echoes.

Repentance, in the nature of it, must follow after sin; but this is not intended to mean—and much less to suggest—an endless round of sinning and repenting. They that repent only that they may sin again, have never yet known what true repentance is. It is like Pharaoh, sinning and repenting, and hardening his heart yet more and more. Surely, a swift destruction must be the end of such a course! Repentance thus ever following sin, only that sin may still follow repentance, is like the hinder wheels of a chariot, ever following the leading wheels—never overtaking them—ever running, ever rolling, and yet always the same distance as before; or as the blind horse in the mill-race, going ever round and round, and yet making no progress; ever beginning where he had begun, and over and over again repeating the same monotonous and weary path. It has been truly said, "In vain is the washing, when the next sin defileth. He hath but ill repented, whose sins are repeated."

With this proviso, then, by way of correction, repentance must be a continuous exercise of man. We must repent oft, because we sin oft. The soul, conscious of its continual sin, and that every day has its imperfections, will every day exercise repent-

ance—repenting, not that we may sin again, but because we *have sinned*. Some of the early Fathers of the Church used to compare the soul to a writing-tablet, from which are washed out the writings of sin, and in their place are stored the writings of grace.

And if it be asked, "How soon must we repent?" we answer, It is never too early; but it may be too late. Oh, how those words act and re-act, the one upon the other—"too soon!" and "too late!" Too soon to sin, too late to repent; too soon to err, too late to amend; too soon to fall, too late to rise! Thus oftentimes is it with the soul—enterprising sin in the passion of the moment; and deferring repentance until it be too late. The wrong is not in the repentance, however late, but in putting off repentance until it is too late. There is a great difference between a *late* repentance and a *deferred* repentance. It has well been said, "True repentance is never too late, but late repentance is seldom true." The penitent thief was late in his repentance, but we could not say that it was deferred repentance, for on the moment of his conviction he straightway repented. The best season for repentance is *at once*. Putting off repentance only gives sin the more time to grow, and the longer opportunity to take deeper root—"While it is called to-day, harden not your hearts." Here we may quote Fuller's significant words: "You cannot repent too soon, because you know not how soon it may be too late." Anselm, once Archbishop of Canterbury, speaking of the growth of sin, says: "The infancy of my sin was in the sins of my infancy; the youth and growth of sin was in the sins of my growth; the maturity and ripeness of sin is in the ripeness of my elder age." This is a loud call to instant and early repentance, seeing that our sin "grows with our growth, and strengthens with our strength." And this is because there is no uprooting by repentance.

All that can be said about the growth of sin can only strengthen the plea for the instant and urgent necessity of repentance. It may truly be said that repentance is easier now than it can ever be again. Let me illustrate this. On the wild western coast of Britain there are tall and craggy cliffs, which overhang the ocean. The people residing near make their livelihood by gathering the eggs of the rock-birds. An iron is fixed in the cliff above, a rope is attached, and the adventurer lowers himself, until he arrives at the ledge of the rock. In doing this many dangers are encountered. Once, a man found the rock to overhang so much that he was obliged to swing himself to and fro, so as to gain his foothold on the rock. He succeeded, but in doing so he lost the rope from his grasp. The rope swung to and fro, its vibrations becoming less and less, and each time more and more distant. The man stood, and, quick as thought, thus reasoned

with himself: "That rope is my only chance of life; in a little while it will be for ever beyond my reach. It is nearer now than it ever will be again. I must lay hold of it instantly, or I die!" So saying, promptitude nerved his strength, he sprang from the cliff as the rope was approaching; he caught it, and was safe!

A deferred repentance is more difficult, because it has afforded time and indulgence, during which sin has become inveterate. It will need some very violent action to uproot it then—some very hard providence, some very severe medicine, some very heavy stroke, some terrible awakening. What would at first have been easily plucked up, must then be ploughed up, digged up, rooted up. Such delay is like that of the sailor deferring his voyage while the wind is fair and the weather true, and then setting sail when storms and tempests are out upon the sea.

And it is, moreover, so unjust to God. God, who has been before all time, and who has given us all our days—that he should be put off with the offer of our *last day*! God, who requires the first-fruits of our harvest, to be thanklessly allowed to gather the scant gleanings of our field! God, who demands as of right, the choicest and chiefest of our sacrifices, to be offered at the last that which is useless for anything else—"the lame, the halt, the blind!" And, instead of the full fruit of the fruitful tree, to receive but a dried and withered branch of a spent vigour and of a used-up life! Is God thus to be dealt with? Surely, a deferred repentance is none so grateful in his sight.

And how strong the reproach against such, as expressed in the examples of the holiest men of God! How long a notice given to Noah—one hundred and twenty years; and yet he deferred not, but proceeded to make the ark. How long a life accorded to Methuselah, but not a year or a day too long for all he owed to God. How sudden the rapture of Enoch, but he was ready! Have Moses and Samuel and Josiah and Timothy overdone their obligation to God by a too early dedication of themselves to his service? or did they not rather find their early years to be the proper and timely morning of a day that was only too short for all that was to be crowded into it? Time and life are short enough, without being shortened more by deferred repentances and spiritual procrastinations.

Repentance must be inward—in the heart and soul and conscience. Outward or external repentance is in vain; it is but the sorrow of restraint, or of detection, or of opportunity taken away; the regret that is felt because of man's judgment rather than the godly sorrow that arises from a sense of God's displeasure. It is the casting of the goods overboard in the severity of the storm, and wishing them back in the day of the sunshine.

Repentance must be the inward moving and prompting of the heart—after a godly sort, not to be repented of. It must be the breaking of the heart for sin, and the breaking off of the heart from sin.

And this repentance must be deep—deep as is the sin, even to the very root. It must also be co-extensive with the widespread character of sin. In the growth of trees, the branches answer to the root. As is the inward growth, so is the outward development; for every branch that is borne from the trunk without, there is a fibre springing forth from the root within; as the branches seek the air of heaven, the fibres seek the fresh springs of earth. Thus must it be with the soul—all its inward feelings answering to all its outward acts—"root downward, fruit upward." If the sin be great, the sorrow must be great. If the sin be deep, the sorrow must be pungent, to search it out. If the sin be fed with the sap of indulgence, the heart must make an earnest effort, either to drain the soil of its too-indulgent life, or to pluck up the fibres from contact with the natural springs that feed them. Repentance and sorrow must equal in intensity the greatness and enormity of the sin. Else is it inadequate and unavailing. Deep, even to the root, must be the contrition of the soul; far-reaching, even to the outermost branch, it must pursue the fruit-bearings to the uttermost sin. "True repentance," says the devout Jeremy Taylor, "is a punishing duty." The intensity of repentance will ever be in proportion to its reality; it will be intense and real if it be deep and thorough.

"Repent ye!"—Such was the first preaching of the Forerunner. All set wrong and kept wrong by sin; all to be set right by the Gospel. "For the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" Such was the great motive urged for repentance. Pure hearts for a holy kingdom; prepared hearts to meet the King. "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance!" such was the practical sequel of the preaching. Call, Cause, and Consequence—all are included here; and these must be the constituent parts of all preaching of repentance—"And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. vi. 11).

"Fruits meet for repentance"—that is, hatred of sin, disgust of sin—hatred and disgust of that which has caused so much trouble, sorrow, shame, and condemnation; the quenching of the fire that has burnt us through and through; the mortifying of the flesh that has been destroying both soul and body; the crucifying of the old man, with its affections and lusts; the bringing into subjection the whole body of sin;—"fruits meet" for a soul weeping forth its very life for conscience of sins



(Drawn by C. J. STANILAND.)

"Whispered her on through fern and glade"—p. 273.

committed, and of wrath provoked;—"fruits meet" for a garden whose weeds are rooted up, whose soil is newly tilled, whose roots are all renewed;—"fruits meet" for one with whom old things are passing away, and all things are becoming new.

True repentance brings conscience of sin, and of its vileness and enormity; sends the soul forth to seek its Lord; brings us to his feet; lays us prostrate there—with costly spices, and with yet more costly tears; with hearts rent, and hair dishevelled; with hearts and hands now ministering to our Lord, in humble penitence, and in adoring praise. Yea, as in the words of Bishop Jeremy Taylor, "God himself, with whom is 'no variable-ness or shadow of change,' is pleased, by descending to our weak understandings, to say that he changes also upon man's repentance, that he alters his decrees, revokes his sentence, cancels the bills of accusation, throws the records of shame and

sorrow from the Court of Heaven, and lifts up the sinner from the grave to life, from a prison to a throne, from hell and the guilt of eternal torture to heaven and a title to never-ceasing felicities."

In a word, hear what the Gospel saith—"And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. . . Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace."

GRANDFATHER'S PORTRAIT.

I.

THE children took the holly boughs,
The ivy with its berries brown,
And through the dear old manor-house
They hurried gaily up and down;
And in and out,
With laugh and shout,
From room to room they wandered all about.

II.

They decked the doorway in the hall
With green festoons on either side,
The antlered stag's head on the wall,
The mantel o'er the chimney wide,
The armour bright
Of many a knight,
That glistened in the Christmas morning light.

III.

They decked their mother's favourite bower
With sprigs in all the strange old nooks,
The oak-shelved room where many an hour
Their father sate amid his books;
Green leaves they thrust
Mid sacred dust,
And wreathed the brows of many a sage's bust.

IV.

And now at last the merry troop,
Their festal labours well-nigh o'er,
Paused with hushed breath, and from the group
Two girls crept through a half-closed door,
And entering there,
With reverent care,
Stole towards an old man seated in a chair.

V.

Sir Henry raised his placid eyes,
From off the book wherein he read,
With looks of love and fond surprise,
Then laid a hand on each young head;
And as he smiled
Serene and mild,
Drew to his heart and blessed each dear grandchild.

VI.

Then Lucy took with solemn air
The greenest, brightest branch of all,
And mounting lightly on a chair,
Reached to a portrait on the wall,
And overhead
A crown she spread,
Wrought with green holly leaves and berries red.

VII.

While Ellen, standing by the side
Of Lucy mounted on the chair,
Her ready offering, too, supplied,
Anxious the loving task to share;
And so these two,
Loving and true,
Circled that pictured head with honours due.

VIII.

It is a soldier's manly form,
Of stalwart frame and bearing high,
With youth and health his cheek is warm,
And hope lights up his bold bright eye;
And in that face
You well may trace
The chivalry of an old warrior race.

IX.

And old Sir Henry turns the while
Upon that face a wistful look,
While o'er his feature steals a smile,
And on his knees he rests his book,
As with a sigh,
His memory
Roams back through all his soldier-life gone by.

X.

The same, yet not the same—the eye
Has lost its fire, but not its light;
Wrinkled and bald that forehead high,

Those ruddy cheeks are thin and white,
And all the pride
Of life has died
In him whose heart hath put the world aside.

XI.

His warfare's done—his earthly sword
The veteran's hand no more shall wield;
His weapon now is God's own Word,
Loins girt with Truth, and Faith his shield:
One battle sore,
Then all is o'er,
The Christian soldier rests for evermore.

JOHN FRANCIS WALLER.

ABOUT NELLIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY."

CHAPTER V.

"CAN wrong be right?" It was the question I pondered over and considered for many a long day, after the evening on which Nellie had told me she loved Frank Stanton. I cast aside my own selfish feelings, and in her happiness tried to find my own, for it seems to me that love cannot be really love which considers itself first and the object of its affection second. And now comes that part of Nellie's history and mine for which I have so often blamed myself since, and yet in which I know I acted only for her good and her ultimate happiness. When she told me that she and Frank Stanton cared for each other, I should have at once withdrawn my sister from her position as drawing-mistress in his family, and prevented, as far as was in my power, anything that might tend to strengthen their mutual feeling. This is what I should have done, I know; but our duty is sometimes very hard, and the temptations against it very strong, and in this case so it was with me, not from any selfish feeling, for my brightest days were those which ended when I first heard Frank Stanton's name—the days in which no second person came, and no cloud rested between me and the one who was nearest and dearest in the world to me. So when Nellie pleaded for her love, and used all her eloquence to show me that it could not be so very wrong for a man of eight-and-twenty to be engaged for a little while—only a little while, for he would be able to tell her soon—without his mother knowing it, I hesitated.

"Frank will tell you, and explain everything to you, Mary," she said; "he wants to see you so much about it. He would tell his mother now, because it is not as if I were a housemaid, I am a lady, dear, only he does not want to make her angry while his debts are unpaid, and she is so anxious for him to marry Emma Drayton, but he can't bear her."

"No, I should think not," I answered, remembering what I had seen of her on the previous evening.

"And, Mary, he likes me so much; he does, indeed, dear," and she looked up, as if she almost thought I should doubt any one but myself caring for her; "and you will think of my happiness a little, won't you, even if it is——"

"Of course I will, Nellie," I answered, wavering.

"And, dear, we shall never be separated, you and I; Frank says so," she said, gathering courage, as she saw I was bending to her argument.

"Never be separated," I thought, as I walked slowly home the next day. Ah, Nellie! we are separated now, for the new life and the new love which has crept into your heart will twine round your being closer and closer, and tighter and tighter, until it shuts out the old life, and until the old love will only cheer and gladden you, but never again be your strength and your happiness as it has been, just as the sun shining on some barricaded tower will find it cannot penetrate within from the ivy that twines and clings around it. So I trudged on, thinking as I went, knowing that Nellie was at home waiting for me, but not as she used to wait, and wondering if I should be long, but probably sitting quietly dreaming over her happiness, which was not yet old enough to have lost its sweet strangeness.

"Miss Cowley," said a voice. I turned round and saw Frank Stanton. "I am so glad I have met you!" he said; "are you quite well? and may I walk a little way with you? Were you very fatigued the other night? I am afraid you were."

"No," I answered, absently, "I was not at all fatigued," for I was thinking of all he had to say to me.

Then there was a little awkward pause, and we went on a few steps in silence, I looking vaguely on into the road, and at the people coming and going, he with his eyes on the pavement, or restlessly staring

around him, longing to speak, but not knowing how to begin.

"Lovely day it has been—quite a clear, orthodox autumn day," and he tried to laugh at his own way of putting it, but failed in the attempt. Somehow, men are so much more clumsy than women, with all the latter's timidity, in delicate matters.

"Yes," I answered, "quite." Then I put my hand for a moment on his arm, and said, "Mr. Stanton, I know all you have to say to me. Nellie told me last night."

"Did she?" he exclaimed, for the first time looking me in the face, and seemingly immensely relieved; "did she? I am so glad; and you are not very angry with the poor child? I am so fond of her, Miss Cowley!"

He said the last words so naturally and boyishly, and so evidently with all his heart, that they did more for him in his cause with me than if he had spoken for half an hour to convince me of his love for my sister.

"But you should not have drawn her into a clandestine engagement," I said. "You have systematically waylaid her, and gained her affections. I don't think it was quite right of you."

"I couldn't help it, Miss Cowley; I couldn't, indeed. Somehow, we liked each other from the first."

"Then why cannot you say so, and face it out? She is a lady," I said, repeating Nellie's own words.

"So I will soon, only I can't bear a bother," he added emphatically. "You see my mother wants me to marry Miss Drayton; and the fact is there are some confounded debts—I beg your pardon, Miss Cowley."

"Well, is Miss Drayton to pay them?" I asked, a little contemptuously.

"No, certainly not. My mother pays them; she docks my allowance."

There was something almost laughable in the grave way in which he made the latter remark, and it seemed so absurd for a man of his age and position to be under the control of his mother.

"But have you nothing but what she allows you?"

"Well, you see, my father left her all the property for life. It wasn't entailed. Look here, Miss Cowley, this is how it is: my father was a younger son and had nothing, but he made a fortune, or something like it. The elder son, old Colonel Stanton, is alive still, and unmarried, and so, of course, I'm his heir, unless he marries. The old fellow is always looking at the girls; I hope he won't marry, by jingo!" and he kicked a stray pebble which happened to be on the pavement, in his impatience.

"But why didn't your father provide for you?"

"Well, you see, I was at Oxford when he died, and those scoundrels of tradesmen had pestered him with their bills." He laughed at the recollection. "I was only a boy, Miss Cowley, and you know they all sow

their wild oats at some time, and mine were sown then;" and he looked at me again with a frank, open expression on his face, which made it easy to understand why Nellie had fallen in love with him. "So my father left all the property to my mother, for fear I should make ducks and drakes of it, and at her disposal; but, you know, I'm the only son, and Daisy is going to marry well, and Charlotte is sure to marry, so it must come to me."

"But in the meantime?"

"In the meantime she makes me a good allowance—quite enough for Nellie and me—only there are the debts. They'll be paid off in a few months, and then I don't care; and Colonel Stanton will be in England next year, and he always promised to do something for me."

"But do you think your mother would be so violently angry if you told her honestly that you were in love with Nellie?"

"Why, it would only make a row," he said; and I saw a look of moral cowardice creep into his face, and I knew that he was a man who could be swayed in almost any direction. "I can't bear a row; and she thinks it would be an excellent thing if I married Miss Drayton. In a few months those debts will be paid off, and Colonel Stanton here, and altogether things may alter, and some one else may marry Emma; and, Miss Cowley, I am sincere in all I say about Nellie, and I would do anything in the world for her." He was at his best when he spoke of his love for Nellie.

"Why haven't you taken to some profession?" I asked.

"Oh, I couldn't. My father meant me for the church, but I am not fit for it, and somehow I couldn't sit down and grind at anything; and I've no occasion, for I am not poor. I know I am considered quite a good match," and he laughed a little egotistically.

"And yet you look out for an heiress?"

"No; my mother does, not I. It's only on account of the debts, and because they consider me extravagant; and my mother thinks if I married an heiress I should not want so much from her during her lifetime."

"Well?" I said, for he had come to a stop.

"Well," he continued, "I can live on very little with Nellie; and once I am out of debt, and that sort of thing, they will like her, I know they will, she is so pretty and clever, and all that; and Daisy is very fond of her—I'm half a mind to tell Daisy."

"And what do you want me to do?"

"Why, I want you to let Nellie come and give her lessons as usual, and—"

"I suppose I ought to put an end to them," I said, a little gloomily. "And I suppose if I did my duty I should tell Mrs. Stanton."

"But you won't! You know it wouldn't alter things, only make them disagreeable, for I won't

give her up, I am determined of that, and you can't make her dislike me," and he was a little vain over her love. Nellie had a way of exalting those she cared for in their own estimation, as well as in hers, till she made them vain; I knew it by myself, and forgave him. "After all," he went on, "I am not a boy, and the deception is mine, not Nellie's. It isn't as if I had persuaded her not to tell you. We have taken you into our confidence directly, you see."

"Well, what do you ask of me?"

"Why, to let matters go on as they are. In a few months I will make them all right; and, Miss Cowley, I am not playing: I am in earnest."

"Yes, I think you are that."

"Well, let her come just the same and teach the girls to draw, and don't be angry if I walk home with her, and let me come and see her sometimes. There can't be any impropriety in that; you are a protection, you know."

"And if I do?" I said, coming to a standstill, for we had reached our door, and I wondered if Nellie was looking down on us from the window.

"I will be so grateful to you, Miss Cowley. I see you are relenting now; mayn't I come in just for a few minutes?"

"No, not now," I answered.

"But I may sometimes? Daisy told me how she came to tea. Ask me to tea some day, Miss Cowley."

"Perhaps I will some day," I said laughing, in spite of myself; "but remember you are only to be admitted when I am at home."

"I will remember anything if you will only remember how much Nellie is to me," he said, as he shook hands and left me, while I stood for a moment looking after him, knowing that Nellie and Frank Stanton were one day to be married, and that I had promised to recognise the engagement, clandestine though it was. Still, after all, I could not help thinking that he was in a manner right when he had said that it was not so very great an iniquity for a man of eight-and-twenty to keep his own counsel in a matter that really only concerned himself, and certainly, in this instance, involved no family disgrace.

"Oh, Mary!" said Nellie, as she sat at my feet that evening and had heard all I had to tell, "there is no one in the world like you."

Then she sat still, too happy to talk, and I was silent also, and sat and thought in the twilight and the firelight, while my little sister's head rested on my

lap. It would all come right in the end, I thought. They could not make such very violent objections to my Nellie, for as she had pleaded the day before, and I had argued only a few hours since, "she was a lady," and Daisy, I knew, was fond of her. Of Frank Stanton's love it was impossible to doubt, with the remembrance of his face that afternoon fresh in my mind; and after all there was one grand relief in all this; for I was not strong, and Nellie would want some one to fight life's battle for her; and though I knew she was clever beyond all doubt, still the cleverest are not always the most prosperous, and she was not formed to rough it in the world. Yes, it was a consolation to know she would have a life of ease and comfort; and if Frank Stanton—as somehow, in spite of all, I know him to be—was selfish, and worldly, and egotistical, still, those very qualities would be almost in her favour once she was married to him, for they would make him proud of a beautiful and clever wife; and his love for her would deaden them and keep them in the background in her presence; and even if it did not, still she would not see them, for love is very blind. Besides, faults in those we care for do not alter our feelings; on the contrary, if we do not blot them altogether out of our memory and sight, we so garnish them and beautify them in our love that they become almost idealised, into virtues. Yes, it was something to know that when I was gone, or my working powers failed, and if Nellie's hands proved weak, that she would be cared and provided for, and the knowledge was not dear at the trifling deceit, for after all it was nothing more, by which it was purchased. For myself, when Nellie was married I should be alone, for I made up my mind that nothing should induce me to live with her; young people are better even without their best and dearest friends. When Nellie was gone I should live on alone; perhaps, too, I should continue always to live in the same house as Miss West, and sometimes of an evening, when her brother came in, we should spend some pleasant hours still. Ah, me! I wondered how it was, that sometimes when Nellie's blue eyes were not present in my mind their place was taken by the grave, earnest face of Dawson West.

"Mary," said Nellie, looking up from her castle-building, "I shall work very hard. I will be so nice to make Frank proud of me. I must begin my grand picture soon. If I only work it out well, it will succeed; don't you think so?"

(To be continued.)

DIED BY FIRE: JOSEPH ANDREW FORD.

THE crowds uncover for the dead,
As though beneath the pall
Reposed the body of a king—
The monarch of us all.

Hath God withdrawn a power from earth
Who ruled the people well,
Or quenched the light which brightly burned
In some grand oracle?

Doth he who on the battle-field
Sustained old England's fame,
Or kept upon the trackless deep
Invincible her name—

Or he who sang upon the wake
Of Shakespeare, lie in state,
Great in the glory of his life,
And after dying great?

Yet e'en the warders of the State,
Or teachers of the soul,
Could scarce from eyes that seldom weep
Bid tears like these to roll.

A nation to its centre torn
Will mighty witness bring,
That pain of sorrow has its rise
In pain of suffering.

Weep then, ye reverent host, for him,
Who, building his own pyre,
Went, like the prophet, up to heaven
In chariots of fire!

Six times into the depths he plunged,
Lost in the awful gloom,
Then came, the rescuer of his kind,
Back from the jaws of doom.

Mid wrath of lurid flames and smoke
He bravely pressed anew;
When, dazed by deeds of glory, Death
Stretched forth his hand, and slew.

See where the dinted helmet shows
The fury of the blow;
And tattered garments, eloquent,
Speak of the furnace-glow.

If strong men weep for very grief,
Will God despise their mood?
They thank Him with a voiceless heart
For one so nobly good.

Our hero hath not died in vain;
For as he ceased to be,
He gathered, in his death, the crown
Of immortality.

Move, mournful cavalcade, and bear
His body to the grave:
England shall keep his prowess green—
Best tribute for the brave.

Fade, all ye splendours of the great!
Here, incorrupt by time,
Stands, towering o'er the wreck of years,
A memory sublime!

GEORGE SMITH.

THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF A LITTLE BIRD.

BY JOHN G. WATTS, AUTHOR OF "TALES AND SONGS," "PICTURES OF ENGLISH LIFE," ETC. ETC.

LIFE IN LONDON.

IT was a pleasant morning in the month of February when I, passing as a parting gift from the pedlar to Kitty, bade adieu to the home in which so much kindness had been experienced. The vicar of the parish, one of the first to espouse the cause of the reformed poacher, had so successfully exercised his good offices among the benevolent, as not only to obtain enough money to give both father and daughter a free passage to Australia, but to present each with a suitable outfit into the bargain. When our luggage—I say *our* luggage, because a large parcel of seed, also a spare cage for my accommodation, formed part—was stowed into the cart by which it had been arranged we were to journey to the station, it was found that no room remained for anybody but the driver. No help for it, my mistress and her father must follow on foot. Such being the case, Ben, and the dame also, although we had a good three miles before us, insisted on forming an escort. The man in charge of the luggage offered to take me, but Kitty loved me too well to allow such a thing. An early train was to convey us to London, where a big ship was waiting to carry us over the sea. A bluish-grey mist was lifting from the meadows as we gained the high road. All the hedgerows were decorated as I

had never beheld them. Every branch and spray was filigreed with hoar-frost in the most delicate manner. I had noticed a few birds moping about as we set forth, and pitied them from my heart, for it struck me that life in the bush during the two months through which we had just passed must have been very hard to endure. However, now that the sun was gaining more power, fresh life seemed to animate my kind. Several times I was greeted by a chirp or two, for my mistress had in no way covered up my wire abode, so that I could easily see and be seen, and more than once a little run of song came from an adjacent bush. In about an hour we were at the station, and never shall I forget the start I received on entering. As we reached the platform, and while I was busy noting down the many novelties presenting themselves, suddenly a shriek, wild and fierce, nearly made me jump out of my feathers. I had heard Ben tell stories about savage Indians giving a war-whoop, when they were on the point of dispatching a victim, and I fully expected to find myself scalped the next minute. Instead, I immediately beheld the author of the noise—a monster with a long tail, and which, like a snake I had heard the pedlar talk about, appeared to have a rattle in every joint—dash past so swiftly that the mere wind from him took away my breath and well-nigh precipitated me to the bottom of my cage. I recovered

from the shock to learn that by a similar monster we were to travel to London. I gave myself up for lost. A little reasoning will often dispel a great deal of fear. On looking about, I began to reflect that, however alarmed I might be, nobody else appeared in the least disturbed; on the contrary, most of the passengers looked happy. Reassured by the presence of my mistress and her father, I accepted my place without a single flutter. A whistle sounded. Three snorts, one long "o—o—o—sh—sh!" and off we went.

Our journey took several hours, and our stoppages were numerous, but I found plenty of amusement in watching the departure and arrival of various passengers. On reaching the terminus, we were met by Ben's great aunt, and a great aunt she was, for she stood over six feet high, and was wide in proportion. This truly fine old woman at once offered to lead Kitty and myself to her abode and take care of us, until such time as Peter Croft should succeed in getting his luggage transferred to the ship. The offer was accepted. I felt anxious to be out of the station, for the confusion bewildered me. People were pouring out and in—porters running hither and thither—iron-wheeled trucks clattering up and down—bells ringing and engines puffing and panting. Everything and everybody seemed out of breath. Kitty looked as much troubled as myself.

On gaining the open air, instead of abating, my bewilderment increased. Added to crowds of people pressing hither and thither, as if their lives depended on their speed, helter-skelter came omnibuses and cabs, coaches and carts, wagons and drays. I had never seen anything like it in the country. Folks took things easier there, and, it struck me, looked a great deal healthier and happier, for here everybody except the very young appeared more or less pale and anxious. A dexterous turn, after a ten minutes' walk, took us out of the highway into a much less frequented thoroughfare; this conveyed us into another still less frequented. Here, at No. 72, our conductor resided. The room into which we were shown was small, but clean and orderly, and my young mistress was welcomed to the best it possessed. In the course of the afternoon the farrier presented himself. His luggage was safely on board, and he, Kitty, and myself were to follow with little delay, as there was every chance of the vessel getting down the river early on the morrow. Accordingly, after tea, we all three set out in the direction of the Docks. Fresh wonders! A general illumination had taken place, making quite a land of enchantment. Shop after shop was one blaze of light. In this window were revealed fabrics of the most beautiful patterns and colours, in that all kinds of artistic confectionery; in the next a glory of jewellery and plate that none could dream of who had not beheld. The pedlar's box, which had so awoken my wonder, was as nothing to this—a mere glowworm to midday sun. Again,

along the pathway of smooth flags, every few yards, brought you to a tall iron post, on the top of which, in a clean glass lantern, burned a broad, clear flame. We made our way over London Bridge and Tower Hill to the Docks. On reaching the vessel we found much confusion upon the deck, but on getting below, things seemed to my mind worse. I was anything but favourably impressed with either the company or the place. The ceiling was low, the people noisy. Being the fore-cabin the furniture was very plain, consisting mainly of a long bench or table, over which a couple of oil-lamps were suspended, and about which were congregated some twenty men, women, and children. There was an odour pervading the place such as I had never before experienced, and such as certainly was not to be desired. The first thought of my dear mistress was to find a hook whereon to hang my cage; her next, to give me a fresh supply of seed and water. After that she tied a handkerchief about my residence, and bade me good night. Fatigued with the day's adventures, I took to my upper perch, and was soon in dreams wandering over the scenes of my earlier days.

(To be continued.)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

112. Reference is made in the New Testament to the act of the apostles after Christ's resurrection in obedience to this command, "Handle me and see," &c. &c. Where?

113. Once only is the Book of Job directly quoted in the New Testament as a part of Holy Scripture. Give the passage.

114. The name Joseph is given to the whole Israelite people at large. Quote the passage.

115. How many psalms are specially quoted in the New Testament as setting forth the work of the Messiah?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 255.

99. "Now therefore why tempt ye God to put a yoke upon the necks of the disciples?" &c. (Acts xv. 10.)

100. "The Word of God" (Rev. xix. 13).

101. Acts xx. 28; Rom. ix. 5; Col. ii. 2; 2 Tim. ii. 13; Heb. i. 8.

102. 2 Tim. ii. 19.—"The Lord knoweth them that are his;" and, "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

103. John x. 21.—"And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter."

104. (1) That by forbidden symbols; (2) that in forbidden places and idolatrous rites; (3) the worship of idols with Jehovah; (4) the worship of idols without Jehovah.

105. Isa. xlv. 6; Zeph. iii. 15.

106. (1) The abolition of interest; (2) the release of debtors every Sabbath year; (3) the jubilee or reversion.

BIBLE NOTES.

THE UNMERCIFUL SERVANT (Matt. xviii. 23-35).



QUESTION of Peter's (verse 21) occasions this parable, and it is spoken to the intent that he may understand why our Lord had instanced seventy times seven as the extent to which forgiveness should be shown to an offending brother. The number seven is used in Holy Scripture to signify completeness, and the multiplication of seventy by seven here signifies that there is to be no stint or limit to the spirit of forgiveness.

"The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants." This is the first of the parables in which God appears as a king. We are the servants with whom he takes account. This he does when he makes us feel our nothingness in his presence; that our trespasses have placed a wide gulf between us and him; and when he startles us into knowing that our fancied security is resting on no solid foundation; in a word, that there is something amiss in our accounts with him.

"Ten thousand talents." How vast this debt was we may see by comparing it with other sums mentioned in the Bible. Twenty-nine talents of gold were used in the construction of the tabernacle. David prepared for the house of God three thousand talents; and Hezekiah paid thirty talents, the tribute put upon him by the King of Assyria. That a servant should owe such a vast debt may best be explained by supposing him to have been in charge of one of the provinces of the king's dominions, and accountable for the revenues derived from it to the royal treasury. This he failed to do, and so "was brought" into the presence of his lord.

"His lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children." The theory and practice of the Roman law was that a debtor's person, his wife, children, and all that he had were part of the property of his creditor, and that in case of necessity, one and all could be sold to clear off the debt. The Mosaic law allowed the selling of an insolvent debtor; and that the children might be taken as bondservants is clear from the circumstances under which Elisha wrought the miracle of increasing the widow's oil (2 Kings iv. 1). The dreadful command that he and all belonging to him shall be sold, is the expression of God's might and power to cast out from his presence, and to deliver over into bondage, all those who have come short of his glory.

"The servant therefore fell down and worshipped him." Having heard his lord's commands, he sees that there is but one course left open to him; he becomes a suppliant. The act of worship consisted in prostrating himself before him on the ground, and

embracing and kissing his feet and knees. His external acts, his earnest entreaty, and his acknowledgment of the debt, "I will pay thee all," touched his lord's heart, and he forgave him the debt. In like manner, when we confess our guilt with godly sorrow, God's wrath passes away, and we are loosed from the chains of our sins.

"The same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence." He who had just had his enormous debt cancelled, goes out from the presence of his master, and commits an outrage on one of his fellow-servants, who owed him a very paltry sum, when compared with the magnitude of the debt he had himself owed, which was one million two hundred and fifty thousand times as great as what was owed to him. This marks out for us, in a very clear way, the difference between men's trespasses against us, and our trespasses against God. The former are to the latter as one hundred pence are to ten thousand talents: the difference is truly infinite! The fellow-servant used to his creditor the very same words he had used when confronted with his lord, whom he had so wronged, and by which he had moved his compassion. But they now fall on his ears unheeded, they have no weight with him; he will not give the time for which he himself so earnestly begged, but having seized him by the throat, he seems not to relax his grasp till he consigns him to the prison, there to remain till his debt is paid. He who has been so freely forgiven, will not forgive.

"Shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee?" This is the second time he is in his lord's presence on this occasion—first as a debtor, and in confinement of some kind, for we read that he was "loosed" (verse 27). Now he comes before him to answer for his crime of receiving pardon for his own offence, and almost at the same instant refusing to extend pardon to one who needed it as much—of having received mercy, and remaining still unmerciful.

"He delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him." The tormentors are those who shall make the life of the prisoner bitter to him, who, by sufferings inflicted on him, will compel him to confess what secret stores—if any—he has laid up for his own use; but the ten thousand talents was a sum that never could be paid.

"So likewise," &c. These are words of earnest warning with which the Saviour concludes this parable. With the same rigour as this ungrateful, unmerciful, unforgiving servant was treated by his master, shall we, if we act a similar part, be treated by our Father which is in heaven.